

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of: Bradley W. Johnson et al.

Serial number: 10/026,289

5 Filed: December 19, 2001

Title: VIDEO TABLE GAME APPARATUS, SYSTEM, AND METHOD OF USE

Attorney docket number: 720.505 PAL.UA-Entertainment System for Table Games

Confirmation No.: 8117

Group Number: 3713

10 Examiner: Jeffrey Panos

Commissioner for Patents

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RESPONSE F AND REMARKS

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In response to the Office Action mailed on December 22, 2005, Applicants submit the following Response F and Remarks.

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING/TRANSMISSION (37 C.F.R. 1.8(a))

I hereby certify that, on the date shown below, this correspondence is being:

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Deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450.

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Transmitted by facsimile to the Patent and Trademark Office.

Fax No.: _____

Signature

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In the claims:

A complete listing of claims follows:

1.-79. (canceled)

5 80. (new) An improved table game apparatus of the type used to play a primary table game of chance, the improved table game apparatus comprising in combination:

A. a gaming table having a game surface;

B. a plurality of game player locations on the gaming table, adjacent to which a plurality of game players may play the primary table game of chance and place at least one primary

10 game wager in connection with the primary table game of chance;

C. at least one dealer location on the gaming table, adjacent to which a dealer may operate the table game apparatus;

D. a video display mounted above the gaming table whereby each player among the plurality of game players may simultaneously view the video display while at the game player

15 locations;

E. a plurality of remotely generated video presentations, the remotely generated video presentations being generated externally and independently from the table game;

F. a video controller in communication with the video display, the video controller being configured to cause the video display to display at least one of the plurality of remotely

20 generated video presentations;

G. a tuner in communication with the video controller, the tuner adapted to receive the remotely generated video presentations and to provide the remotely generated video presentations to the video controller;

H. a digital computing unit in communication with the video controller, whereby the plurality of remotely generated video presentations, the video controller, the tuner, the video display, and the digital computing unit cooperatively provide the remotely generated video presentations that are simultaneously viewable by each player among the plurality of game players while at the plurality of game player locations at the gaming table;

I. a table input device in communication with the digital computing unit, the table input device adapted to allow a dealer to control the display of the remotely generated video presentations on the video display; and

10 J. a moveable player input device disposed on the game surface and in communication with the digital computing unit, the moveable player input device allowing at least one game player to make a selection from a plurality of game options, the player input device being moveable between the game player locations whereby at least one game player may input commands to the digital computing unit in order to play a supplemental game.

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81. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 also having a supplemental game program loaded into the digital computing unit whereby the video display and digital computing unit cooperatively provide a supplemental game display visible to the plurality of game players while at the game player locations at the gaming table.

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82. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 also having a supplemental game program loaded into the digital computing apparatus whereby the video display, the digital computing unit, and the player input device cooperatively provide an interactive supplemental

game display visible to the plurality of game players while at the game player locations at the gaming table.

83. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 wherein the player input device is in
5 communication with a machine input device, the machine input device in communication with
the digital computing unit.

84. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 wherein the table input device is
disposed on the game surface adjacent the dealer location.

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85. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 wherein a polling unit is in
communication between the digital computing unit and a machine input device and the table
input device.

15 86. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 wherein the remotely generated video
presentation is a sporting event.

87. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 wherein the remotely generated video
presentation is a live sporting event.

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88. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 80 wherein the remotely generated video
presentation is a horse race.

89. (new) An improved table game system of the type used to play card games in which a plurality of game players may place wagers in connection with the card games, the improved table game system comprising in combination:

A. at least a first and a second card gaming table, the first card gaming table having a first surface and the second card gaming table having a second surface;

5 B. a video system associated with the first and second card gaming tables and including:

i. a first video display apparatus in communication with the computer network and mounted above the first surface of the first card gaming table whereby a first game player at the first game table may view first card gaming table side-wager indicia on the first video display apparatus;

10 ii. a second video display apparatus in communication with the computer network and mounted above the first surface of the second card gaming table whereby a second game player at the second card game table may view second card game table side-wager indicia on the second video display apparatus;

15 iii. a tuner adapted to receive at least one remotely generated video presentation;

iv. a video hub in communication with the tuner;

20 v. a video content serving apparatus in communication with the video hub and the first and second video display apparatus, the video content serving apparatus being adapted to receive the at least one remotely generated video presentation and to display the at least one remotely generated video presentation on the first and second video display apparatus;

25 vi. at least a first moveable supplemental game input unit mounted on top of the first card game table whereby the first card game player may select from a plurality of side wagering commands to the video content serving apparatus; and

vii. at least a second moveable supplemental game input unit mounted on top of second card game table whereby the second card game player may select from a plurality of side wagering commands to the video content serving apparatus.

5 90. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 89 wherein the first moveable supplemental game input unit is in communication with a machine input device, the machine input device in communication with the video content serving apparatus.

91. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 89 wherein a first table input device is 10 disposed on the first surface of the first card gaming table adjacent a dealer location, the table input device adapted to allow a dealer to control the display of the remotely generated video presentations on the first video display.

92. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 91 wherein a polling unit is in 15 communication between the video content serving apparatus and the first table input device.

93. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 89 wherein the remotely generated video presentation is a sporting event.

20 94. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 89 wherein the remotely generated video presentation is a live sporting event.

95. (new) The improved table game apparatus of claim 89 wherein the remotely generated video presentation is a horse race.

96. (new) A table game apparatus used to play a primary table game of chance, the table game apparatus comprising in combination:

A. gaming table means for playing the primary table game of chance, the gaming table means having a game surface and a plurality of game player locations on the game surface,

5 adjacent to which a plurality of game players may play the primary table game of chance and place at least one primary game wager in connection with the primary table game of chance, the gaming table means further having at least one dealer location adjacent to which a dealer may operate the gaming table means;

B. video display means mounted above the gaming table means for presenting at least one 10 remotely generated video presentation, the video display means being simultaneously viewable by each player among the plurality of game players at the game player locations;

C. video controller means in communication with the video display means for controlling the display of the remotely generated video presentations;

D. tuner means in communication with the video controller means for receiving the remotely 15 generated video presentations;

E. digital computing means in communication with the video controller means for controlling the operation of the video controller means, the tuner means and for controlling the presentation of the remotely generated video presentations;

F. player input means located on the game surface and in communication with the digital 20 computing means for allowing at least one of the game players to make a selection from a plurality of game options, the player input means being moveable between the game player locations whereby at least one of the game players may input commands to the digital computing means in order to play a supplemental game of chance; and

G. table input means in communication with the digital computing means for allowing a dealer to control the display of the remotely generated video presentations on the video display means.

5 97. (new) The table game apparatus of claim 96 further comprising a supplemental game program loaded into the digital computing means, the supplemental game program providing a supplemental game display on the video display means.

10 98. (new) The table game apparatus of claim 96 wherein the player input means is in communication with machine input means, the machine input means in communication with the digital computing means.

99. (new) The table game apparatus of claim 96 wherein the table input means is located on the game surface adjacent the dealer location.

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100. (new) The table game apparatus of claim 96 wherein the remotely generated video presentation is a sporting event.

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REMARKS

Claims 1-79 have been canceled and claims 80-100 have been added.

5 Petition for Extension of Time

A petition for a 3-month extension of time is enclosed along with a credit card payment form for the required fee.

Deposit Account Authorization

10 Applicants believe that no additional fees are necessary at this time. However, in the event additional fees are required, Applicants authorize the Commissioner to take any necessary fees, including those under 37 CFR 1.16 and 1.17, from deposit account 50-0913.

A Brief Review of One Embodiment of Applicants' Invention

15 In one embodiment of Applicants' invention, a table game system is provided that allows a player to place a side wager in conjunction with a primary game. The use of a video display, such as an LCD screen, may allow for dynamic side wager presentations to be presented to the player, increasing player interest and therefore encouraging players to play longer and generating more revenue for the gaming establishment. *See* pages 5, 7, and 45.

20 Applicants teach that the video display can be used for a variety of purposes. A tuner and video controller may receive a variety of remotely generated independent video content sources that are displayed on the video display. For example, the video display may present sporting, news, or other video entertainment, text, or banners. *See* page 44. The video content source may be sources such as a VCR, television, cable video source, DVD, or a hard disk drive. *See, e.g.,*

page 32. The video content may be generated by sources that are independent of the table game or the table equipment. For example, a live sporting event may be down loaded using a satellite link. This video content is generated from sources that are completely separate and independent from the table game apparatus.

5 When used as part of the side wager game, the video display may display sporting events related to the side wager game. For example, Applicants disclose viewing a horse race on the video display. A moveable player input device mounted on the table game allows for a player to choose from several game options, *See* pages 44-45.

10 **Claim Objections**

Claims 42 and 43 were objected to due to an informality. Claims 42 and 43 have been canceled. Withdrawal of the claim objection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 112

15 Claim 43 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112 as being indefinite. Claim 43 has been canceled. Withdrawal of the §112 rejection is respectfully requested.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Office has rejected claims 38 and 40-45 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,165,069 issued to Sines (hereinafter “Sines”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,517,073 issued to Vancura (hereinafter “Vancura”) and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,770,533 issued to Franchi (hereinafter “Franchi”).

The Office has rejected claim 53 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,770,533 issued to Franchi (hereinafter “Franchi”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,165,069 issued to Sines (hereinafter “Sines”).

To the extent that these rejects or references are considered in view of the new claims,

5 applicants offer the following remarks:

Sines purports to disclose an “Automated system for playing live casino table games having tabletop changeable playing card displays and monitoring security features”. Vancura purports to disclose an ‘‘Betting bystander method and apparatus.’’ Franchi purports to disclose an ‘‘Open architecture casino operating system’’.

10 New independent claims 80, 89 and 96 of Applicants’ application specifically require a tuner in communication with the video controller, the tuner receives remotely generated video presentations that are generated independently from the table game. Sines, does not teach, disclose or suggest a tuner. Further, Sines does not teach, disclose or suggest receiving video presentations that are generated remotely from the game table.

15 The office action states on page 4 that Sines teaches a tuner at column 14, lines 26-67 and column 15, lines 1-28. A review of columns 14 and 15 of Sines shows that a tuner is not disclosed. Columns 14 and 15 of Sines recite the standard architecture of a computer in which a display control board is in communication with a CPU and a display. The device of Sines cannot receive a remotely generated video presentation because it lacks a tuner. At best, the device of 20 Sines can merely display the contents of a previously stored memory location in the computer.

Sines teaches away from applicant’s invention in that the content of Sines’s display is generated locally within data processor system 90, (see figure 24).

The office action states on page 3, that Sines discloses a plurality of video presentations, where the video presentations are generated independently of the table game, at column 17, lines

62-65. Column 17, lines 62-65 of Sines states: “*Fig. 7 shows the player station when no bet has been placed and nothing is being displayed. Alternatively, there can be some attract mode advertising of the casino game in anticipation of the next game or the arrival of customers.*”

Column 17, lines 62-65 of Sines does not teach, disclose or suggest a plurality of video

5 presentations that are generated remotely and independently from a table game as recited in claims 80, 89 and 96. At best, Sines teaches displaying the contents of a previously stored memory location associated with data processor system 90.

The addition of the cited references to Vancura and Franchi fails to overcome the shortcomings of Sines. None of the cited references, teach, disclose or suggest the use of a tuner

10 to receive remotely generated video presentations and to display the video presentations in conjunction with a supplemental game.

New independent claims 80 and 96 of Applicants’ application specifically require a table input device that is in communication with the digital computing unit. The table input device allowing a dealer to control the display of the remotely generated video presentations on 15 the video display.

None of the cited references teach, disclose or suggest a table input device that allows a dealer to control the display of remotely generated video presentations on a video display. There is no such table input device disclosed by either, Sines, Vancura or Franchi.

Further, it would not be obvious to modify the gaming table of Sines to include the 20 display of Vancura and the remote access terminal of Franchi. As the court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit has set forth, even if a prior art reference could be modified to construct an applicants invention, the modification is not obvious unless there is a suggestion in the prior art.

In re Laskowski, 10 USPQ2d 1397,1398(Fed. Cir. 1989). There is no suggestion in Sines to

modify the gaming table of Sines to include a display mounted above the table and a moveable player input device.

The dependent claims recite additional patentable features and are allowable with the independent claims.

5 For example, claims 81 and 97 recite that a supplemental game program is loaded into the digital computing unit.

Because Sines, Vancura and Franchi do not, alone or in combination, teach or suggest all elements of Applicants' claims, they do not render Applicants' claims obvious. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Office to withdraw the §103(a) rejection.

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Conclusion

For all of the above reasons, the Applicants submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the application or amendment, the Examiner is encouraged to call the Applicants' attorney at (775) 826-6160.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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